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## Occupational Employment and Wages in Chattanooga – May 2017

Workers in the Chattanooga Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.61 in May 2017, about 15 percent below the nationwide average of \$24.34, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that, after testing for statistical significance, 19 groups had significantly lower wages than their respective national averages, including life, physical, and social science; management; and healthcare practitioners and technical.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 6 of the 22 occupational groups, including production; transportation and material moving; and office and administrative support. Conversely, 11 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including construction and extraction; business and financial operations; and personal care and service. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

**Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Chattanooga Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2017**

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Chattanooga	United States	Chattanooga	Percent difference <sup>(1)</sup>
Total, all occupations .....	100.0	100.0	\$24.34	\$20.61*	-15
Management .....	5.1	5.6*	57.65	45.67*	-21
Business and financial operations .....	5.2	4.2*	36.70	30.09*	-18
Computer and mathematical .....	3.0	2.1*	43.18	36.77*	-15
Architecture and engineering .....	1.8	1.6*	41.44	38.13	-8
Life, physical, and social science .....	0.8	0.4*	35.76	26.47*	-26
Community and social service.....	1.5	1.0*	23.10	20.26*	-12
Legal.....	0.8	0.5*	51.62	(2)	-
Education, training, and library.....	6.1	4.7	26.67	23.23*	-13
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.4	1.0*	28.34	22.65*	-20
Healthcare practitioners and technical .....	6.0	6.7*	38.83	32.12*	-17
Healthcare support .....	2.9	2.9	15.05	13.99*	-7
Protective service .....	2.4	2.0*	22.69	17.69*	-22
Food preparation and serving related .....	9.3	9.6	11.88	10.07*	-15
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance ...	3.1	3.2	13.91	11.65*	-16
Personal care and service.....	3.6	2.6*	13.11	11.46*	-13
Sales and related .....	10.2	10.4	19.56	17.43*	-11
Office and administrative support.....	15.4	16.1*	18.24	16.36*	-10
Farming, fishing, and forestry .....	0.3	0.3*	13.87	14.03	1
Construction and extraction.....	4.0	2.8*	24.01	20.11*	-16
Installation, maintenance, and repair .....	3.9	4.3*	23.02	21.94*	-5
Production .....	6.3	9.4*	18.30	16.69*	-9
Transportation and material moving.....	7.0	8.5*	17.82	16.10*	-10

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in the Chattanooga Metropolitan Statistical Area is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

(2) Estimate not released

\* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

- Data not available.

One occupational group—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Chattanooga had 22,750 jobs in production occupations, accounting for 9.4 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.3-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$16.69, significantly below the national wage of \$18.30.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the production group included assemblers and fabricators, all other, including team assemblers (4,790), welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers (1,770), and first-line supervisors of production and operating workers (1,410). Among the higher paying jobs in this group were power plant operators and first-line supervisors of production and operating workers, with mean hourly wages of \$35.09 and \$26.60, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were pressers, textile, garment, and related materials (\$9.82) and laundry and dry-cleaning workers (\$9.88). (Detailed data for production occupations are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available, go to [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_16860.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_16860.htm).)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Chattanooga Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in several of the occupations within the production group. For instance, welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers were employed at 2.8 times the national rate in Chattanooga, and meat, poultry, and fish cutters and trimmers, at 2.3 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, tool and die makers had a location quotient of 1.0 in Chattanooga, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development.

## Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

With the release of the May 2017 estimates, the OES program has replaced 21 detailed occupations found in the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) with 10 new aggregations of those occupations. In addition, selected 4- and 5-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) industries previously published by OES will no longer be published separately. Some of the 4-digit NAICS industries that are no longer being published separately will instead be published as OES-specific industry aggregations. More information about the new occupational and industry aggregations is available at [www.bls.gov/oes/changes\\_2017.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/changes_2017.htm).

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

## Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES data available from BLS include cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates for the nation; over 650 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), metropolitan divisions, nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industry levels; and national estimates by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at [www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm).

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Each year, two semiannual panels of approximately 200,000 sampled establishments are contacted, one panel in May and the other in November. Responses are obtained by mail, Internet or other electronic means, email, telephone, or personal visit. The May 2017 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2017, November 2016, May 2016, November 2015, May 2015, and November 2014. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 72 percent based on establishments and 68 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted sample employment of 82 million across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 58 percent of total national employment. The sample in the Chattanooga Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,657 establishments with a response rate of 72 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_tec.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_tec.htm).

The May 2017 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2017 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/soc](http://www.bls.gov/soc) and information about the 2017 NAICS is available at [www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm](http://www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm).

## Metropolitan area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Chattanooga Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Catoosa, Dade, and Walker Counties in Georgia; Hamilton, Marion, and Sequatchie Counties in Tennessee.

### **Additional information**

OES data are available on our regional web page at [www.bls.gov/regions/southeast](http://www.bls.gov/regions/southeast). Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at [www.bls.gov/oes/oes\\_ques.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm). Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods\\_statement.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf).

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

**Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Chattanooga Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2017**

Occupation <sup>(1)</sup>	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level <sup>(2)</sup>	Location quotient <sup>(3)</sup>	Hourly	Annual <sup>(4)</sup>
Production occupations .....	22,750	1.5	\$16.69	\$34,720
First-line supervisors of production and operating workers .....	1,410	1.4	26.60	55,320
Electrical, electronic, and electromechanical assemblers, except coil winders, tapers, and finishers ...	160	0.4	15.64	32,520
Structural metal fabricators and fitters .....	520	4.0	15.07	31,330
Assemblers and fabricators, all other, including team assemblers .....	4,790	2.2	15.50	32,240
Bakers .....	430	1.4	11.00	22,890
Butchers and meat cutters .....	170	0.7	13.49	28,060
Meat, poultry, and fish cutters and trimmers .....	600	2.3	10.58	22,000
Food batchmakers .....	350	1.4	14.63	30,430
Food processing workers, all other .....	290	4.0	11.38	23,680
Computer-controlled machine tool operators, metal and plastic .....	200	0.8	19.90	41,380
Extruding and drawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic .....	150	1.2	13.58	28,250
Forging machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic .....	40	1.1	15.55	32,340
Cutting, punching, and press machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic .....	480	1.5	15.67	32,580
Grinding, lapping, polishing, and buffing machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic .....	(5)	(5)	18.12	37,680
Machinists .....	400	0.6	22.46	46,710
Model makers, metal and plastic .....	40	4.0	24.76	51,490
Molding, coremaking, and casting machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic .....	390	1.5	15.65	32,540
Multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic .....	260	1.3	16.98	35,310
Tool and die makers .....	120	1.0	22.20	46,180
Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers .....	1,770	2.8	20.89	43,460
Layout workers, metal and plastic .....	30	2.2	22.70	47,230
Metal workers and plastic workers, all other .....	60	1.5	19.68	40,930
Prepress technicians and workers .....	80	1.6	16.07	33,420
Printing press operators .....	810	2.8	14.47	30,100
Print binding and finishing workers .....	240	2.9	16.60	34,520
Laundry and dry-cleaning workers .....	440	1.2	9.88	20,560
Pressers, textile, garment, and related materials .....	50	0.7	9.82	20,420
Sewing machine operators .....	210	0.9	11.47	23,850
Textile bleaching and dyeing machine operators and tenders .....	100	6.1	14.29	29,730
Textile cutting machine setters, operators, and tenders ..	90	3.7	14.45	30,060
Textile knitting and weaving machine setters, operators, and tenders .....	(5)	(5)	14.24	29,620
Textile winding, twisting, and drawing out machine setters, operators, and tenders .....	910	17.3	13.36	27,800
Cabinetmakers and bench carpenters .....	100	0.6	14.88	30,950
Woodworking machine setters, operators, and tenders, except sawing .....	190	1.4	15.68	32,620
Power plant operators .....	80	1.4	35.09	72,990
Stationary engineers and boiler operators .....	(5)	(5)	24.22	50,390
Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators .....	170	0.9	19.42	40,390
Chemical equipment operators and tenders .....	140	1.0	22.22	46,210
Separating, filtering, clarifying, precipitating, and still machine setters, operators, and tenders .....	(5)	(5)	20.10	41,810
Crushing, grinding, and polishing machine setters, operators, and tenders .....	40	0.8	15.53	32,290
Mixing and blending machine setters, operators, and tenders .....	200	0.9	15.66	32,570

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Chattanooga Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2017 - Continued**

Occupation <sup>(1)</sup>	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level <sup>(2)</sup>	Location quotient <sup>(3)</sup>	Hourly	Annual <sup>(4)</sup>
Cutters and trimmers, hand.....	(5)	(5)	13.69	28,480
Cutting and slicing machine setters, operators, and tenders .....	80	0.7	13.06	27,170
Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers.....	1,070	1.2	17.32	36,030
Dental laboratory technicians .....	90	1.5	21.40	44,500
Ophthalmic laboratory technicians .....	(5)	(5)	13.94	28,990
Packaging and filling machine operators and tenders ....	440	0.7	14.38	29,910
Coating, painting, and spraying machine setters, operators, and tenders .....	210	1.5	18.10	37,650
Painters, transportation equipment .....	40	0.4	22.79	47,410
Photographic process workers and processing machine operators .....	630	16.7	13.19	27,440
Molders, shapers, and casters, except metal and plastic .....	140	2.0	13.99	29,100
Paper goods machine setters, operators, and tenders ...	60	0.4	12.77	26,560
Helpers--production workers .....	910	1.3	13.19	27,440
Production workers, all other.....	340	0.8	17.05	35,450

Footnotes:

- (1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Chattanooga Metropolitan Statistical Area, see [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_16860.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_16860.htm)
- (2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.
- (3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.
- (4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a "year-round, full-time" hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.
- (5) Estimate not released.